

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN 497

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR TQ UN

SUBJECT: UN OBSERVED PLEBISCITE IN MARIANAS

REF: A) STATE 7037; B) USUN 125

DEPT PASS INTERIOR DOTA & OMSN

CINCREP FOR STATUS LNO

1. ON ASSUMPTION THAT COMMONWEALTH COMPACT WILL BE SIGNED WITH MARIANAS POLITICAL STATUS COMMISSION IN NEXT FEW DAYS, WE BELIEVE THAT DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO CONSIDER WHAT UN VISITING MISSION AND TC WILL LOOK FOR WHEN DECIDING WHETHER TO GIVE STAMP OF APPROVAL TO FORTHCOMING PLEBISCITE.

2. VISITING MISSION WILL ASSUME THAT US, AS ADMINISTERING AUTHORITY, HAS RESPONSIBILITY FOR ASSURING THAT PLEBISCITE IS "HONEST" (E.G. NO RIGGING OF BALLOTS) AND "FAIR" (E.G. VOTERS GIVEN REAL CHOICE OF ALTERNATIVES PROVIDED WITH CLEAR EXPLANATION AHEAD OF TIME ON POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF ALTERNATIVES.). IN ORDER TO ALLAY SUSPICIONS AND ASSURE VISITING MISSION THAT PLEBISCITE HONEST AND FAIR, US SHOULD ENABLE VISITING MISSION TO OBSERVE ELECTION CAMPAIGN BEFORE VOTE AS WELL AS POLLING PLACES ON DAY OF VOTE. IN ADDITION, AS NOTED REFTTEL B, TT GOVERNMENT
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SHOULD BE ABLE TO DEMONSTRATE THAT IT HAS GIVEN BOTH SUPPORTERS

AND OPPONENTS OF COMMONWEALTH COMPACT EQUAL ACCESS TO TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATION FACILITIES IN MARIANAS DURING CAMPAIGN.

3. VISITING MISSION AND TC WILL BE PARTICULARLY SENSITIVE TO CHARGES THAT US ATTEMPTING TO ANNEX TERRITORY. THESE CHARGES CAN BE REBUTTED SO LONG AS CAMPAIGN IN FAVOR OF PLEBISCITE IS EXCLUSIVE FUNCTION OF MARIANAS POLITICAL STATUS COMMISSION AND ITS SUPPORTERS. WE THEREFORE RECOMMEND THAT NO REPEAT NO US OFFICIAL PARTICIPATE IN ELECTION CAMPAIGN.

4. SINCE CHOICES BEING OFFERED MARIANAS DIFFER SUBSTANTIALLY FROM ALTERNATIVES CONTAINED IN PRESENT EDUCATION FOR SELF-GOVERNMENT PROGRAM, (AS OUTLINED TO LAST SESSION OF TC), NEW ESG PROGRAM DESIGNED EXCLUSIVELY FOR MARIANAS SHOULD BE PREPARED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. TC RECOGNIZES RESPONSIBILITY OF US AS ADMINISTERING POWER TO CONDUCT ESG PROGRAM. WE BELIEVE THAT VISITING MISSION AND TC WILL CONSIDER ESG PROGRAM LEGITIMATE USG AND TTPI PUBLIC INFORMATION EFFORT SO LONG AS IT REMAINS OBJECTIVE IN PRESENTING ALTERNATIVES WITHOUT BIAS.

5. IT IS MOST IMPORTANT TO KEEP TOTALLY SEPARATE ESG PROGRAM, WHICH IS US RESPONSIBILITY, AND ELECTIONEERING FOR AND AGAINST COMPACT, WHICH IS PART OF MARIANANS' OWN POLITICAL PROCESS IN EXERCISING THEIR RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION.
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